

Architectural And Historic Survey



104-214

Identification

STREET ADDRESS: 632 West Main Street	HISTORIC NAME: Delevan/First Baptist Church
MAP & PARCEL: 29-1	DATE / PERIOD: 1877-1883
CENSUS TRACT AND BLOCK: 1-303	STYLE: Victorian Romanesque
PRESENT ZONING: M-1	HEIGHT (to cornice) OR STORIES: 1 storey
ORIGINAL OWNER: Delevan Baptist Church	DIMENSIONS AND LAND AREA: 12,980 sq. ft.
ORIGINAL USE: Church	CONDITION: Good
PRESENT USE: Church	SURVEYOR: Thomsen/Bibb
PRESENT OWNER: First Baptist Congregation	DATE OF SURVEY: 1977/1985
ADDRESS: 632 West Main Street	SOURCES: City/County Records
Charlottesville, Virginia 22901	Alexander, <u>Recollections of Early Ch'ville</u>
	Richard T. McKinney, <u>Keeping the Faith</u>

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

First Baptist Church is an excellent example of Victorian Romanesque style. The building is rectangular in form, three bays wide by six bays long. A high single-storey facade fronts on Main Street, but because of ground slope, the main floor is raised above a full-storey basement at the sides and rear. Construction is brick, common bond on the facade, American elsewhere. A square, projecting tower of brick forms the central bay on the entrance facade. Above the peak of the roof gable, the tower supports a large octagonal lantern on a square base, both of wood. The lantern is decorated with attenuated corner pilasters and is covered with a domed roof. Matching projecting towerlets stand at the facade corners and rise slightly above the roof eaves. The main structure is covered with a gable roof of red, composition shingle. Eaves are finished with a white-painted projecting wood cornice above a corble-arch supported brick overhang. Projecting piers suggestive of pilasters separate the bays along the side wall of the main floor and serve to buttress the high walls. A corbelled brick water table separates the basement from main floor. Main floor windows, one each bay, are high, semi-circular headed, double-hung sash with leaded stained glass. Basement windows are large, six-over-nine-light, double-hung sash. Main entry is through paneled, double doors, with segmental-arch lintel, in the base of the tower. A single window like other main-floor windows is located in the tower above the door. A low, wrought iron fence, with alternating tall and short piles, and gothic-motif gateposts, surrounds the church yard.

HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

In 1863, the 800 black members of the Charlottesville Baptist Church petitioned for, and were granted, approval to separate from the church and form their own congregation. They conducted services in the parent church for awhile and later in the basement of the old Delevan Hotel, taking its name for the congregation. Built in the 1820's by General John H. Cocke of Bremo as a temperance hotel, the building had later housed a classical school and had been used as a military hospital during the Civil War. A free school for blacks had been conducted there since the War. The hotel was popularly known as "the Mudwall" because of the terre pise wall that enclosed the property. The congregation purchased the hotel building in 1868 (ACDB 68-76). When the deteriorating old building was condemned in 1876, it was demolished, and work was begun immediately on the present church building. The cornerstone was laid on November 7, 1877, and Builders and Mechanics Liens give December 12, 1883 as the date of completion (ACDB 82-458, 83-76). It was dedicated on January 2, 1884, but apparently was not yet quite ready for occupancy, as there is a record of the first service being held there in the basement on July 3, 1884. With the completion of the new building the congregation changed its name from "the Delevan Baptist Church of Charlottesville" to "the First Colored Baptist Church of Charlottesville".

RECONNAISSANCE LEVEL SURVEY REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCE
RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY FORM

Reviewed by Margaret Peters

DHR Identification Number: 104-~~0254~~ ³⁷⁶

Other DHR Number:

Property Date(s) 1883

PROPERTY NAMES

Delevan Baptist Church (632 W. Main St.)

EXPLANATION

Historic/Location

First Baptist Church

Historic

County/Independent City: Charlottesville

State: Virginia

Magisterial District: N/A

Tax Parcel: 29-1

USGS Quad Map Name: CHARLOTTESVILLE EAST

UTMs of Boundary:

Center UTM:

Restrict location and UTM data? N

ADDRESSES

Number	Thoroughfare Name	Explanation
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632 -	W. Main St.	
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Vicinity: Town/Village/Hamlet:

Name of National Register Historic District:

Name of DHR Eligible Historic District:

Name of Local Historic District:

632 West Main Street Minor Design Control District

Physical Character of General Surroundings: City

Site Description/Notable Landscape Features:

Built up, narrow front and east side yards, historic iron fence along Main Street sidewalk, railroad tracks directly behind.

Ownership: Private

NR Resource Type: Building

WUZITS

Seq. #	# of	Wuzit Types	Historic?
1.0	0	Church	Historic

TOTAL: 0
Historic: 0

Non-Historic: 0

PRIMARY RESOURCE EXTERIOR COMPONENT DESCRIPTION

Component	#	Comp Type/Form	Material	Material Treatment
Structural System	0	Masonry	Brick	Stretcher Bond
Roof	0	Gable: front	Asphalt	Shingle
Window(s)	0	Round-arched	Glass	Stained

INDIVIDUAL RESOURCE INFORMATION

SEQUENCE NUMBER: 1.0

WUZIT: Church

Primary Resource? Yes

Estimated Date of Construction: 1883

Source of Date: Written Data

Architectural Style: Late Victorian

Description:

Delevan Baptist Church is one of Charlottesville's premier Victorian churches. The large nave-plan building features elevations with recessed wall surfaces and decoratively corbeled brickwork at the cornice level. Round-arched door and window openings have memorial stained-glass. A tower rises up the center of the front (north) elevation and resolves into an octagonal two-stage frame cupola with pilastered sides, round-arched louvered vents, and a copper-sheathed domed roof. The church also features a marble name and date plaque on the front elevation, a rectangular apse-like wing to the rear, and a basement level.

Condition: Good

Threats to Resource: None Known

Additions/Alterations Description:

Number of Stories: 1.0

Interior Plan Type:

Accessed?

Interior Description:

Relationship of Secondary Resources to Property:

DHR Historic Context: Architecture/Community Planning

Ethnicity/Immigration

Religion

Significance Statement:

Delevan Baptist Church, listed individually in the National Register, is one of several black baptist churches that historically constituted the heart of Charlottesville's African-American community. The congregation separated from the white-administered Charlottesville Baptist Church in 1863 and met at first in the basement of the Delevan Hotel, an antebellum building that stood on the site of the present church. The cornerstone for the present building was laid in 1877 and the church was essentially complete in 1883, although the first service in the new church was not held until 1884. The church was also known historically as "the First Colored Baptist Church of Charlottesville." Today, Delevan Baptist Church stands as one of the city's

foremost historic and architectural landmarks.

GRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

Medium	Medium ID #	Frames	Date
B&W 35mm Photos	14632	27 - 31	2/ /1996

BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA

Sequence #: 1.0 Bibliographic Record Type: Local Records
Author: City of Charlottesville
Citation Abbreviation:
Charlottesville Architectural and Historic Survey files
Notes:

Sequence #: 2.0 Bibliographic Record Type: Report
Author: Liebman and McQuaid
Citation Abbreviation:
Study of Ten Black Baptist Churches in Albemarle County.
Notes:

CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT EVENTS

Date: 2/ /1996
Cultural Resource Management Event: Reconnaissance Survey
Organization or Person: J. Daniel Pezzoni, Preservation Con
ID # Associated with Event:
CRM Event Notes or Comments:

MAILING ADDRESS

Honorif:
First :
Last :
Suffix :
Title :
Company: First Baptist Church

Address: 632 W. Main St.

City : Charlottesville State: VA
Zip : 22901- Country: USA
Phone/extension: 804-979-0952

Individual Category Codes:

Mailing Address Notes:

Surveyor's Notes:

104-214

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

